



Emergency response warehouse opens



Photo by Martin Chahin

President Ricardo Maduro speaks to the crowd gathered to celebrate the opening of the new emergency response regional warehouse on Soto Cano Air Base, Feb. 11. The warehouse stores non-food items to be used in the event of a natural or man-made disaster in this region.

By Spc. Jon Christoffersen
Iguana Editor

The U.S. Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance opened new emergency response regional warehouse on Soto Cano.

U.S. Ambassador to Honduras Frank Almeguer and Honduran president Ricardo Maduro cut the ribbon, officially opening a disaster relief warehouse here Feb. 11.

The warehouse was built and equipped to provide quick support to the Central American region in the event of a natural disaster. The warehouse provides non-food emergency relief articles; supplying items such as blankets, plastic sheeting, water containers and medical kits.

Central America, which is prone to flooding, earthquakes and volcanic disasters, had been supported previously by supplies out of Rodman Naval Station in Panama that shut down in 1999.

The warehouse is under the direction of the OFDA, which is the office within the U.S. Agency for International Development

and is responsible for providing non-food humanitarian assistance in response to international crisis and disaster situations. The 10,000-square-foot, pre-engineered metal warehouse was constructed by Eterna under contract with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers at a cost of \$305,000 after Hurricane Mitch devastated the Honduran and Nicaraguan countryside. Mitch made OFDA decide to stage commodities in the region in preparation for future operations.

"After Hurricane Mitch, the United States provided to Honduras more than \$100 million in food, housing and basic supplies," Almeguer said. "The administration of President George W. Bush is willing to work with democratic

governments to reach a bigger prosperity

"Hondurans feel grateful and committed to support this effort and honored to have been selected for a center that not only helps Honduras but all Latin American region"

Ricardo Maduro
President of Honduras

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JTF-Bravo aids Guatemala in counter drug operations

By Spc. Jon Christoffersen
Iguana Editor

Recently members from Joint Task Force-Bravo joined with Guatemalan law enforcement and military to conduct counter narcotic missions in Guatemala.

Members from Army Force, Joint Staff, Air Force Forces and 1st Battalion 228th Aviation Regiment joined together to form Task Force-Enabler to support Operation Mayan Jaguar.

"The operation was very successful from both a training and execution perspective," Lt. Col. Fletcher Crews, TF-Enabler and ARFOR commander said.

The operation netted some large numbers of seizures. A total of 22 air and sea vessels were boarded and 15 land objectives visited resulting in the destruction of 250,000 marijuana plants and associated processing facilities, 2.4 metric tons of cocaine seized and \$250 million in illicit commerce

confiscated during the numerous missions.

Crews said that the integration of JTF-Bravo troops, which provided mainly air support, with the Guatemalan military and police forces was seamless.

"The 1-228th provided excellent support throughout," Crews said. "Planning and execution was first rate, particularly since there were elements of three companies with two different types of aircrafts."

The 2.4 metric tons or 240,000 kilos of cocaine taken in was a huge accomplishment when compared to last year when Operation Mayan Jaguar netted none.

JTF-Bravo supports counter drug missions throughout the area of operations, working closely with numerous governments.

JTF-Bravo's commitment to counter drug operations is part of Southern Command's mission of "conducting military - to - military engagement and counterdrug activities throughout the theater to promote democracy, stability, and collective approaches to threats to regional security."

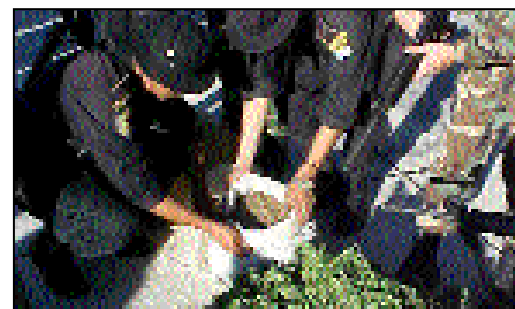


Photo by Lt. Col Fletcher Crews

Members of the Guatemalan military and police forces inspect some of the drugs they seized during Operation Mayan Jaguar. The operation, assisted by members of JTF-Bravo, succeeded in capturing more than 2.4 metric tons of illegal drugs in Guatemala during the operation conducted earlier this month.

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Commanders Corner

Split disbursement benefits military and individuals

By Maj. Mario Matos

From Army Forces Executive Officer

When I entered the military in the late 70's sure pay, known now as direct deposit, was an option; not everyone took advantage of this benefit.

A few years later, direct deposit became mandatory and everyone enrolled; this now is part of the enlistment packet prior to deploying to basic training. This is why your recruiter probably was running around like a chicken with its head cut off trying to get you to open a bank account, prior to your departure.

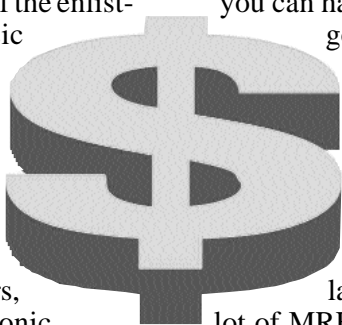
Uncle Sam tends to come up with ideas to help us manage our money better.

Today, when we file our travel vouchers, we can receive our earnings via electronic fund transfer directly into a bank account of our choosing; this benefit is no longer optional. The other benefit that most of us are not taking advantage of is split disbursement.

Split disbursement is an option that allows us to have finance pay the government credit card directly and alleviates us from having to send the check for payment (DD Form 1351-2, AUG 1997, block 1, Payment). How does this work you ask? Well, let's say you go TDY and know that the hotel cost was \$150, you ate diner at several restaurants and it came to \$95; the total charges to your government credit card comes to \$245. With SD you can have finance send the \$245 directly to the

government credit card account. Any remaining funds made from the TDY will be sent to your direct deposit account; that money is yours to spend. The point to remember is what ever you charge on the government credit card during your TDY is the amount you want on the SD block.

NOTE: The Government lost \$42 million last year on delinquent credit cards; that's a lot of MRE's. Split disbursement an idea that will eventually become mandatory, but why wait until then when it's a great management tool now. I have been using this option since my arrival to Soto Cano Air Base in June 2000 and have been since.



The Iguana

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Chaplain's Corner

Increase in rank is opportunity to do God's work

By Chaplain (Lt. Col.) Gary A. Pendrak
JTF-Bravo Chaplain

Before the Gulf War started and things got so exciting in the Persian Gulf area, America had some small Army helicopters flying off Navy ships.

This was part of the mission of protecting the oil tankers in the Gulf. I was the chaplain for the unit providing those choppers, the 18th Aviation Brigade out of Fort Bragg, NC.

I had the opportunity to visit some of those flight crews for Christmas and Easter. It really was quite an unforgettable experience.

I remember standing on one ship, rocking back and forth, thinking to myself, "Join the Navy - see the world. Join the Army - see the Navy. What's wrong with this picture?"

When I was flown onto one of the ships, a frigate, a sailor was appointed to give me the grand tour. I got to see everything aboard. I saw the equipment stowed below as ballast. I saw the engine rooms. I saw the hangers. I saw the crew's quarters, I even got to touch a Harpoon missile. After the tour was over, the sailor took me back to the fantail where the ship's exec once again welcomed me aboard and told me where I would be staying. He rattled off some numbers and letters that must have described the compartment or something, he then left.

I looked at the sailor. Then I pointed to the gold oak leaves on my uniform and asked him, "Sailor, do you know what this means in the Army?" Well, you could see the wheels turning in his head. In the Navy, the gold oak leaves mean lieutenant commander, but what did they call it in the Army? After he had been worrying about it for a while, I told him, "Sailor, it means easily confused."

He smiled, "It means the same thing in the Navy sir. Follow me, I'll show you to your quarters."

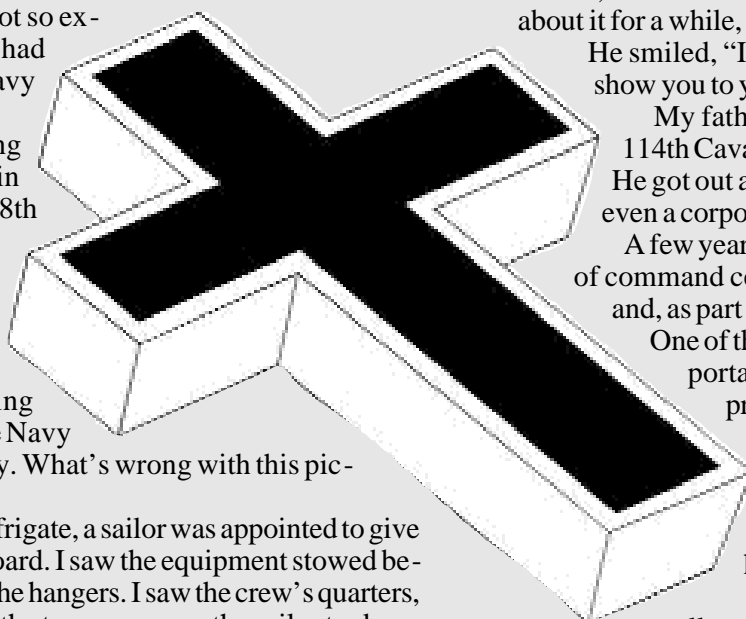
My father-in-law was in the Army during World War II in the 114th Cavalry and fought through the islands against the Japanese. He got out as a Tech Sergeant. He would point out, that, back then, even a corporal was a pretty high-ranking soldier.

A few years ago, I was fortunate enough to attend a brigade change of command ceremony. The outgoing commander was a full colonel and, as part of the ceremony, he was "froked" to brigadier general.

One of the things he said during his speech was that the most important thing to him about becoming a general was not the prestige of the rank, his children would be sure to keep him humble. Nor was it the increased pay, his wife would take care of that. The greatest thing was that the Lord, God, almighty had given him more power. Power that he could use, not for himself, but that he could use to help soldiers and their family members.

What a concept. A promotion, not as a reward for doing well, not an increase in pay because you've been here longer, but a promotion as God's way of using you to do his will.

Think of that as you consider your rank. How do you use its power and authority to do God's will?



1,229 vehicle accidents, 665 fatalities

Joint Security Forces' simple tips to keep you safe on the road

By Master Sgt. Jose Pizano
JTF-Bravo Traffic Accident Investigator

In 2001, Honduras had 1,229 vehicle accidents with 665 people fatalities. Over half of those vehicle accidents were caused as result of drivers being under the influence of alcohol.

The statistics show that one in two drivers driving on Honduran roads are driving under the influence.

JTF-Bravo vehicle accidents stats for the past four years shows 225 vehicle accidents that were reported to JSF. That's an average of 56 per year; that number is high for such a small number of folks assigned here. Most were minor accidents such as improper backing, not using a spotter, inattentive driving, failure to maintain proper clearance when turning or backing. How can we keep those stats at a lower number, keep you safe and still maintain our vehicle fleet meet mission capable?

- When backing a vehicle, always use a ground guide and if no one is available, get out of the vehicle to insure no obstructions are behind you. If the vehicle you are operating is not equipped with a backup warning signal, sound the horn a couple times to warn anyone in the area of your intentions.

- Make sure you come to a complete stop at all posted stop signs and intersections and stop at marked crosswalks for pedestrians.

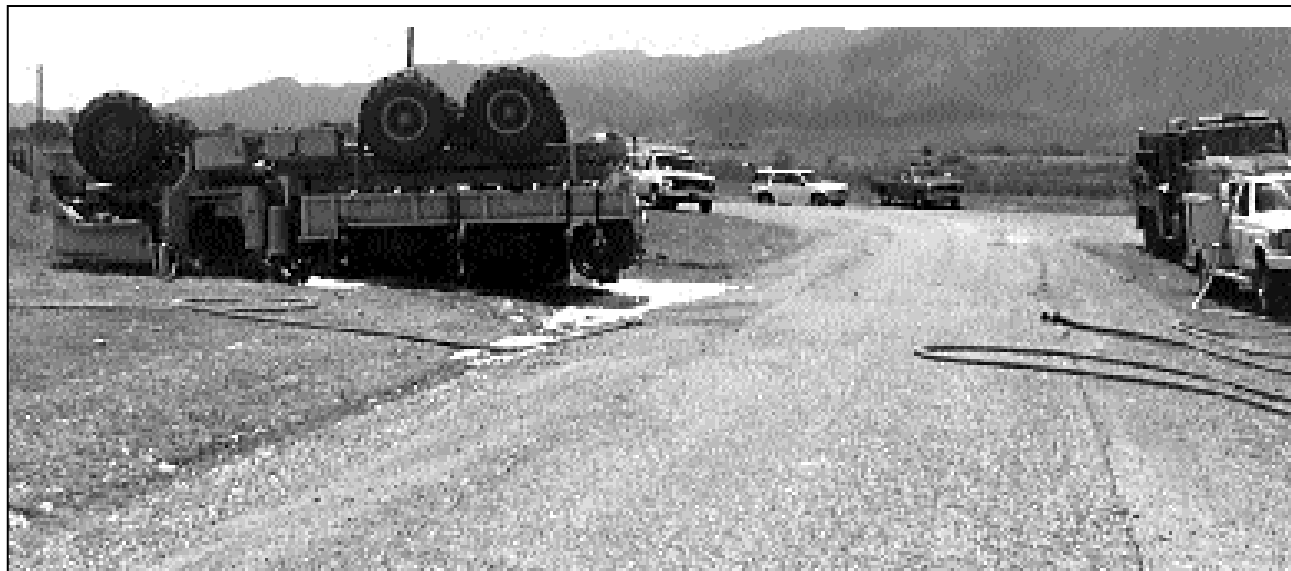
- The traffic flow on post is very moderate so vehicle operators have tendencies to speed. The speed limit base wide is 15 mph, to include the base perimeter. The maximum speed when passing individuals in formation or running is 10 mph.

- Follow and do not exceed the posted speed limit and always use your seatbelt.

- If not performing official duties, military members should not drive government vehicles off-post.

If you are planning a trip, rental cars are available. However, sometimes renting a car can become very expensive if you are involved in an accident. For the most part, Honduran rental car companies will make you pay a deductible ranging from \$2,000 - \$4000 if you are involved in an accident and you're at fault. So think real hard and ask yourself if you really need that rental car.

An alternative to renting a car is to have MWR plan



Photos by Master Sgt. Jose Pizano

your trip and, at times, arrange a driver for you.

Going to Comayagua? You can ride the shuttle bus which leaves post on an hourly basis.

Most of the streets off post are very narrow and always congested with bicycles, vehicle and pedestrian traffic. When driving in Honduras drive defensively and be ready for the unexpected.

Stray animals such as pigs, cows, horses and even chickens wander out onto the roads creating unexpected driving hazards. Another type of item that becomes a hazard to us is a tree branch or a pile of rocks on the side of the road. Believe it or not, this is the most common way Honduran drivers warn other drivers of some type of an emergency. Remember, we are in a poor country and most Honduran drivers will use any means at their disposal on the roads as a warning device. The problem is that when the emergency is resolved, most drivers leave the debris on the roads creating another hazard. Very few Honduran drivers ever use traffic triangles as warning devices, even at night.

Driving at night in Honduras should be avoided if at all possible. The streets and highways are poorly lit and some vehicles travel without lights. To make matters worse, many people congregate on the road to socialize, and in some cases even to sleep on the shoulder of the roadway. This is one reason, JTF-Bravo Policy Memorandum 15-97, Government Vehicle Use Policy was created.

This policy specifically states that "Due to the dangers of traveling in Honduras, driving government vehicles off post during the hours of darkness will be avoided." Furthermore, during overnight MWR trips, vehicles may not be operated between 8 p.m. and 6 a.m.

So what if you did everything right and still got into an accident? If you are involved in an accident off-post you can expect to have your driver's license confis-

cated by Honduran National Police (surrender your government license only, not your state-side license) until you make an appearance in traffic court.

But perhaps the most important thing to remember if you have the misfortune of getting involved in a traffic accident is to notify the JSF Desk Sergeant. If dialing from an on-post phone, you may reach JSF at extension 4170. If dialing from an off-post phone dial 234-4634 and ask for extension 4170. If you're not near a phone but have a Saber Radio, contact the Joint Operations Center via Bravo net, their call sign is Bravo 21.

How can we assist you? We can help you by getting medical attention and if necessary initiate an independent traffic investigation separate from the Honduran police. If after conducting our own investigation, we find out is not your fault for the accident, we can argue this point with the traffic judge who oversees your case.

In some instances we have the right, even as an American, to demand a reconstruction of the accident.

So be safe and remember to contact JTF-Bravo immediately after an accident.

Safety reminders

- When backing a vehicle, always use a ground guide and if no one is available, get out of the vehicle to insure no obstructions are behind you. If the vehicle you are operating is not equipped with a backup warning signal, sound the horn a couple times to warn anyone in the area of your intentions.

- Make sure you come to a complete stop at all posted stop signs and intersections and stop at marked crosswalks for pedestrians.

- The traffic flow on post is very moderate so vehicle operators have tendencies to speed. The speed limit base wide is 15 mph, to include the base perimeter. The maximum speed when passing individuals in formation or running is 10 mph.

- Always use your seatbelt.

- If not performing official duties, military members should not drive government vehicles off-post.



Task force enjoys day of games and comradeship



Photos by Martin Chahin

Nelson Mendoza, J1, part of the Army Forces basketball team, puts up a shot during the game against Medical Element and Joint Security Forces.

By Spc. Jon Christoffersen
Iguana Editor

Although no judges were influenced and no payoffs were reported, Joint Task Force Bravo held their own version of the Olympics Feb. 14.

Organizational Day was a day set aside for everyone in the task force to have the chance to compete in events and build morale and comradeship among the troops.

The day started with the opening ceremony in which Lt. Col. Jose Coll, task force deputy commander, welcomed everyone to the festivities and instructed them to have fun.

"It's not many jobs where you can be ordered to have fun," Chaplain (Lt. Col.) Gary Pendrak, JTF-Bravo chaplain said about Coll's remarks at the formation which officially opened the activities for the day.

Events ranging from ordinary basketball games to the out of the ordinary 8X100 crazy relay, filled the organizational day. The events had winners and they were tallied to produce the overall champions of the events.

1st Battalion, 228th Aviation Regiment walked away with top honors and the big trophy from the events, with Air Force Forces and Army Force following in second and third place.

One event, the water joust, had to be cancelled due to any unexpected fire emergency on base, but all the other events went off without a hitch.



A member of the Air Force Forces team, runs with the baton during the 4X400 Relay as part of the organizational day. 1st. Battalion, 228th Aviation Regiment went on to win the relay with Army Forces coming in second.



Representatives from the top three finishers stand with their trophies at the conclusion of the games. 1st Battalion, 228th Aviation Regiment took the top honors with AFFOR and ARFOR coming in second and third place.



Teams race piggy back style during the commander's mystery event which was the final event of the day. The teams competed in 17 different events during the organizational day.

Benefits, quality workplace vital to national defense

By Maj. Paul Koscak
Air Force Print News

WASHINGTON — Air Force and Department of Defense officials told members of the Senate Armed Services Committee on Feb. 13 that recruiting, training and quality-of-life incentives are key to ensuring the security of the United States.

Investing in people through training, higher pay and bonuses must be as important as buying the latest weapon systems, said Michael Dominguez, assistant secretary of the Air Force for manpower and Reserve affairs.

Specialties such as intelligence, security and communications will be particularly hard hit and must be offset by cuts in less critical career fields, he said.

The president's 4.5 percent pay raise — the highest in 20 years — and "a robust and targeted bonus program" will help the Air Force compete with the private sector in both attracting and retaining quality airmen, Dominguez said. Nurses, dentists, aviators and some enlisted specialties now receive cash bonuses for continued service.

"But the decision to either stay or separate is ultimately made around the family dinner table," he said.

That calls for a "new social contract" to ensure families feel good about the benefits and support they re-

ceive, said David Chu, the undersecretary of defense.

"Sixty percent of troops have family responsibilities," he told the committee. Family support programs such as child-care, youth activities and spouse employment must be "part of the equation."

Chu said the number of servicemembers on food stamps has plummeted from 19,400 in 1991 to 4,200 in 2001. An anticipated 2,100 users are expected in 2002, thanks to DOD's family subsistence supplemental allowance program that cuts down on out-of-pocket expenses.

The president's budget increases funding for family support centers by 8.5 percent or \$17 million.

Those issues are far more challenging for the Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve. Support must extend not only to activated citizen airmen and their families but to their employers as well, Lt. Gen. James Sherrard, chief of the Air Force Reserve, told the committee.

More than 11,000 reservists are mobilized in support of Operation Enduring Freedom, he said, supporting everything from intelligence to aerial port to medical services.

"The Air Force has enjoyed more than 30 years of unparalleled total force integration success," Sherrard said of the Reserve. "You can't tell us apart and that's the way it should be."

Although the Reserve exceeded its recruiting goal for the first time in five years, with manning at 100.6

percent of its authorized strength, the command is not resting on its laurels, he said.

Recruiting candidates without prior service still lags behind, and Stop-Loss has not helped, dwindling the traditional pipeline of potential reserve candidates. To enhance the pool of experienced reservists, retired military people are being encouraged to continue service in the Reserve, Sherrard said.

"We save valuable training dollars and benefit from specialty skills, experience and knowledge these individuals possess," he said.

"Once returned, members earn additional pay, retirement points, years of service and promotion opportunity."

Like the Reserve, the Air National Guard exceeded its recruiting goal but continues striving to attract quality servicemembers through increased income and benefits, Brig. Gen. David Brubaker, deputy director of the Air National Guard, told the committee.

Thanks to Congress, Servicemen's Group Life Insurance offers a \$250,000 benefit and the Uniformed Service Thrift Savings Plan provides added retirement income, for instance. Emphasis is being placed on increased tuition assistance, computer access and child-care for guard members during drill weekends, he said.

"The program significantly enhances mission capabilities by reducing pressures on Air National Guard personnel and their families."

Demographics reveal black women reaching top enlisted ranks

By Staff Sgt. Marcia Triggs
Army News Service

WASHINGTON — Army demographics reveal that black females are shattering glass ceilings, and obtaining senior positions that were once only held by men.

More than 50 percent of female sergeants major are black even though blacks make up 46 percent of the female enlisted population.

Out of 14 female sergeants major in the Military District of Washington area, 11 are black.

Enlisted soldiers who attain the distinction of serving as sergeants major are the epitome of success in their chosen field, according to Army personnel officials. They advise and initiate recommendations to their respective commander and staff in matters pertaining to the local noncommissioned officer support channels.

Interviews with five of MDW's 11 black female sergeants major indicated that they were not selected as senior leaders to meet any Army quotas. They were promoted because they put soldiers first, did the "hard jobs" and took advantage of higher education.

"It's sad, but after I made master sergeant I heard that I helped the Army make two quotas because I'm black and female," said Command Sgt. Maj. Barbara Smith, Fort Meade's Headquarters Command Battalion sergeant major.

Smith has been in the Army for 24 years and has served two tours as a first sergeant, one as a drill sergeant and another as the senior enlisted advisor to the Commander in Chief, Pacific Command.

During the joint assignment at Pacific Command, Smith was the only female among her peers, and she said in that role she met periodically with the sergeant major of the Army, and his equivalents in the other four military branches.

Smith said that she addresses comments that question her position as a senior leader by saying that she worked hard for all of her promotions.

Anyone who thinks the Army promotes based on quotas is incorrect and needs to learn how the centralized promotion system works, said Sgt. Maj. Brenda McCall, the operations sergeant major for Military District of Washington Ceremonies and Special Events.

"If you look at the records of those who have made it to the top versus those who haven't, you'll see that the people who hold senior positions have more and have done more than those who are not getting promoted," McCall said.

When it comes to promotion, the Army is as fair as fair can be, said McCall, who

has served in the Army, mainly with divisions, for 26 years. Promotions are based on performance, and it's kind of hard to get around that, she added.

The U.S. Department of Labor's definition of a glass ceiling is artificial barriers, based on attitudinal or organizational bias, that prevent women and minorities from advancing within their organization and reaching their full potential.

The barrier that exists for so many in the civilian sector doesn't exist in the Army if a person decides not to sit on laurels, and instead works toward achieving the top, said Sgt. Maj. Rosemary Waters-Lindo, senior Equal Opportunity adviser for MDW.

Waters-Lindo, who has a master's degree in counseling and who is a 25-year Army soldier, said she was able to overcome her biggest challenge in the Army as a sergeant first class stationed in the MDW area by always being one step ahead of her peers.

"During Desert Shield/Desert Storm, I was in charge of 150 Intelligence Reserve officers," Waters-Lindo said. "My boss thought that I didn't have the capacity to know what was going on because I didn't have an intelligence background, but I would come to work hours before everybody else to read and prepare myself for the mission."

For anyone who wants to be a good leader, regardless of gender or ethnicity, Waters-Lindo said, the old Army logo still reigns true. "To gain success, I hate to use the old motto, 'Be All That You Can Be.' However, I'll say be the best that you can be and go beyond what the Army is asking you to do."

Take one step at a time to reach the top, Waters-Lindo said, by setting goals. She said that she started writing down her goals as a private first class.

The Army is full of soldiers who are content with serving their country, following orders and riding the wave of normalcy.

Then there are soldiers like Sgt. Maj. Andrea Marks, who volunteered to be a drill sergeant, went to Master Fitness and Airborne schools, has served two tours as a first sergeant and is one course from completing her master's in Public Administration. She was selected as sergeant major after 17 years in the Army.

Marks, 39, a senior enlisted adviser in the Defense Threat Readiness Agency, said she started looking at how she could get ahead of the ball game from day one. People are where they are in life because of the decisions that they made, she said.

"Coming from London, England, I knew very little about the military when I enlisted," Marks said. "I didn't know what a semester hour was, but while on active duty I've earned my associate's, bachelor's and now I'm working on my master's."

BRIEFS

All users e-mail

Effective immediately, by order of the commander, any non-critical information that needs to be passed to the entire JTF-Bravo populace shall be done via the public affairs office. Information may be sent, in electronic form (e-mail text, Word document, PowerPoint, etc.), to the PAO e-mail distribution group. Public affairs and the Power Lizard are members of this e-mail group. From these offices, the information can be posted in The Iguana, on the Commander's Channel or the E-News, sent via All e-mail, and/or broadcast on the Power Lizard, according to the point of contact's request. Users will not send non-critical information using all of the e-mail groups (AFFOR, ARFOR, JSF, etc.). Time-sensitive information, requiring immediate action or critical widespread dissemination, will be sent only by the command group, PAO or J6. Questions may be directed to the J-6 office at ext. 4167 or 4259 or the PAO at ext.4150.

Vehicle passes

With the reduced FPCON, government vehicles no longer require a cantonment area pass that is signed by the unit commander or director. This policy extends to EZ Goes, mules and any other government vehicle. Privately owned vehicles still must have a valid pass. If there are any questions, contact the law enforcement desk at extension 4170.

Fire safety advisory

Smoking is not authorized in any facility on Soto Cano in accordance with JTF-B Directive 1 and JTF-B, AFI-32-2001, sup 1. This states smoking is not permitted in any facility including metal dorms and hooch's, as well as all public assembly facilities including all clubs, B.X., gym, ext. If you witness personnel violating these directives please report to your chain of command or to the Fire Safety office at ext. 4553/4343/4818. If you have any questions contact Tech. Sgt. Wright. Fire safety is everyone's responsibility.

Health Fair

MEDEL and the preventative medicine folks are bringing the Soto Cano Health Fair to you on Feb. 26 from 9 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. in the DFAC Annex. Issues such as nutrition, fitness and disease prevention will be discussed. There will also be people available to talk about tobacco cessation, cholesterol and a host of other activities. If you have any questions, contact preventative medicine at ext. 4500.

Common sense improves the mission

By Master Sgt. Jeff Bohn
Public Affairs

My father said, "if common sense was so common, then everyone would have it." An odd correlation is the people who lack common sense also tend to lack good customer service.

A lack of common sense can lead to bad business practices. The end result is the customer isn't satisfied.

Why is this important? Because you may be in charge of a process that gives poor customer service. Here is an example.

The public affairs office use to do bilingual identification card and flight line badge photos only on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons. The reason was due to photography capabilities. Digitally processing the photos individually would take nearly 20 minutes. However, if we had 30 people's image we could process all thirty in under an hour. So it was cost effective to batch-process the images and have the people stop by the next day to pick up their photos.

The process changed a year ago when we started shooting instant film. The instant film had people in and out of the door within three minutes, pictures in hand. Yet we still held to the Tuesday and Thursday schedule for nearly six months.

One day the light bulb ignited and we questioned why we were turning people away. After contemplating the process we concluded that turning away customers was a negative effect to an improved process.

We still guarantee service on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons — but now we take walk-ins if we have a photographer in the building.

Conversely, there are some businesses that are so large that they have lost their personal touch. I had service with a national telephone carrier while stationed in Alaska. I overpaid the final bill and carried a 74 cents credit starting in 1997.

I failed to close the account and after being in Washing-

ton, D.C. for a year the bill found me, still exacting a 74 cent credit. In August 2001, I expended one of my morale calls to close the account. What I heard perplexed me. The short story was I had to call back between 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. and make the request through the accounts department.

I explained that I was calling long distance from Honduras, I had been getting a monthly billing statement for nearly five years that reflected a 74 cent credit. I told her that postage, paper and processing of nearly 60 invoices would have cost much more than the 74 cent credit was earning them. I also told her that I wasn't going to expend another morale call to clarify this. She wouldn't change her position and continually apologized about not being able to help me.

I apologized to her. I told her I was sorry to deal with a company that had such poor practices in place to assist the customer. If this had been something that I needed badly and couldn't wait until morning I would have been upset. In this case, I just giggled to myself that a company with this type of business practice shouldn't survive in corporate America. To this date I am still getting that monthly 74 cent credit statement every sixth of the month.

The lesson of the story is retrospective of how many policies do you have in your shop, office, building and unit that don't pass the common sense test? Are there programs or policies you have that could be changed to achieve the same end result, but reduce the number of steps and hurdles your customers or servicemembers have to maneuver through? When was the last time you looked for flaws in the process, or do you believe, "we've always done it this way, so we will always continue to do it this way."

It isn't practical to totally live our lives around the quality aspect, after all we are a fighting force that preserves democracy while not always practicing it. However, I believe we should keep in mind that one of the reasons we are in charge is to do a job. The better we can do the job, the better the mission gets accomplished. Many of our jobs are customer oriented, so by improving the customer service process we are also benefitting the mission.

Warehouse

(Continued from Page 1)

and well-being for the citizens of this region."

The warehouse, which will be managed by Joint Task Force-Bravo, is on Soto Cano but the purpose of the relief supplies stretches beyond one country.

"Although the supplies are centralized here in Soto Cano Air Base, and of course, it specially benefits Honduras, this will allow an immediate response in any part of the region," Almeguer said.

President Maduro expressed his gratitude for the entire country during his speech at the opening ceremony.

"Hondurans feel grateful and committed to support this effort and honored to have been selected for a center that not only help Honduras but all Latin American regions," Maduro said through a Spanish translation.

Since the closure of the naval base in Panama, the warehouses in New Windsor, Maryland and Miami have served the region. In addition to the two warehouses in the United States, OFDA also has warehouses in Guam and Italy. OFDA responds to all types of natural disasters and complex emergencies and provides assistance when lives are threatened by natural or man-made disasters.



Photo by Martin Chahin

Jump ...

In conjunction with the opening of the OFDA warehouse, JTF-Bravo conducted a joint jump with the Honduran military Feb. 11 on Soto Cano.

New Horizons 2002: Camp construction, opening ceremonies mark beginning of engineering exercise



Top left, El Salvador and U.S. military engineers work together to build a kitchen at the base camp in El Salvador. Top, Army engineers check progress of construction at the base camp in Nicaragua, which was turned to mud by unusually heavy rains. Left, Nicaraguan and U.S. color guards stand proud at the New Horizons opening ceremony in La Gateada, Nicaragua Feb. 14.

Photos & story by 1 Lt. Richard Komurek
Public Affairs Director

New Horizons 2002 kicked off with construction projects and opening ceremonies for task forces in El Salvador and Nicaragua last week. New Horizons, a yearly humanitarian exercise, brings active duty and Reserve military engineers and medical personnel from units across the U.S. to Central American nations in order to build schools, medical clinics, water wells and provide medical services.

JTF-Bravo plays a key role in New Horizons

activities by having overall responsibility and operational control over U.S. forces deployed in the Central American region. JTF-Bravo personnel also travel to the various task force locations to provide support and give oversight in areas of communications, medical care, safety, engineering, force protection and public affairs.

Over the next four months, about 1,000 U.S. troops will be involved in construction projects and medical exercises in both countries that will provide training to U.S. and host nation forces as well as providing aid to people living in poverty. For New Horizons efforts in both nations the value of U.S. aid is estimated at about \$24 million.



Nicaragua's president Enrique Bolanos shakes hands and thanks U.S. troops during the opening ceremony for Task Force Chontales.



Members of the Wisconsin Army National Guard drill holes for light posts at the base camp for Task Force Chontales. The guardsmen were performing their last day of duty in their two week deployment to Nicaragua.